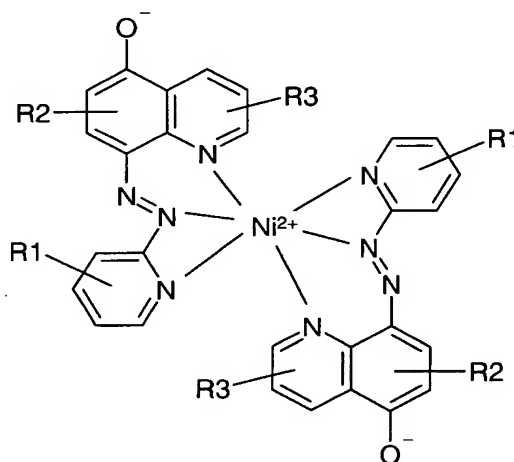


Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (currently amended) A coating composition for making a protein microarray, the composition comprising a gelling agent or a precursor to a gelling agent, and microspheres; the microspheres containing a low fluorescing dye represented by the Formula (I):



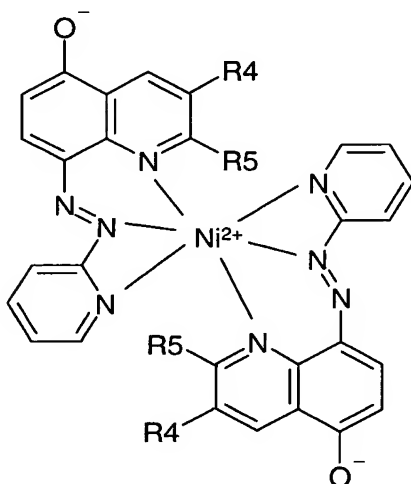
Formula (I)

wherein: R_1 = one or more substituent selected from the group of H, chloro, alkoxy carbonyl, arylsulfamoyl, or alkylsulfamoyl;

R_2 = one or more substituent selected from the group of H, carboxamido, or alkoxy carbonyl;

R_3 = one or more substituent selected from the group of H, chloro, substituted or unsubstituted alkyl, aryl, carboxamido, or alkoxy carbonyl.

2 (original) The coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the microspheres contain a dye represented by the Formula (II)



Formula(II)

wherein: R_4 = alkoxy carbonyl;
 R_5 = H, chloro, or alkyl.

3 (original) The coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the gelling agent is gelatin.

4 (original) The coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the gelling agent undergoes thermal gelation.

5 (original) The coating composition according to claim 3 wherein the gelatin is alkali pretreated gelatin.

6 (original) The coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter between 1 and 50 microns.

7 (original) The coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter between 3 and 30 microns.

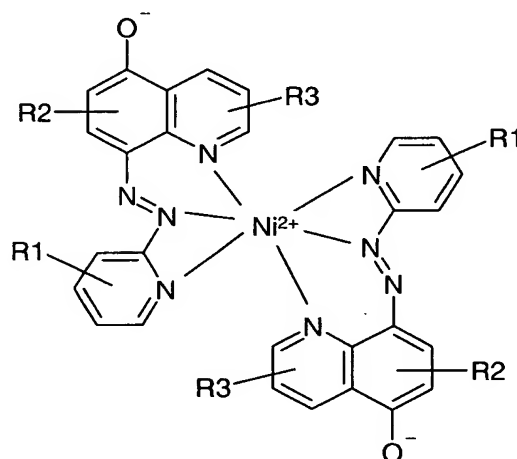
8 (original) The coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter between 5 and 20 microns.

9 (original) The coating composition according to claim 1 wherein the microspheres comprise a synthetic or natural polymeric material.

10 (original) The coating composition according to claim 9 wherein the polymeric material is an amorphous polymer.

11 (original) The coating composition according to claim 10 wherein the amorphous polymer is polystyrene.

12 (withdrawn, currently amended) A microarray comprising:
a substrate coated with a composition comprising
a gelling agent or a precursor to a gelling agent and microspheres;
the microspheres containing a low fluorescing dye represented by Formula (I):



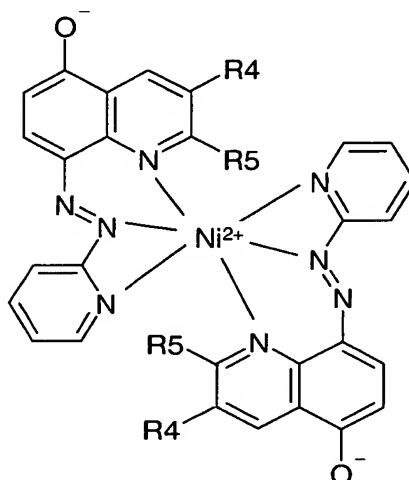
Formula (I)

wherein: R1 = one or more substituent selected from the group of H, chloro, alkoxy carbonyl, arylsulfamoyl, or alkylsulfamoyl;

R2 = one or more substituent selected from the group of H, carboxamido, or alkoxy carbonyl;

R3 = one or more substituent selected from the group of H, chloro, substituted or unsubstituted alkyl, aryl, carboxamido, or alkoxy carbonyl; and
wherein the microspheres are immobilized on the substrate.

13 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres contain a dye represented by Formula (II):



Formula (II)

wherein: R^4 = alkoxycarbonyl; and
 R^5 = H, chloro, or alkyl.

14 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the gelling agent is gelatin.

15 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres bear chemically active sites.

16 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 15 wherein the chemically active site is bioactive.

17 (withdrawn) A microarray according to claim 12 wherein the substrate comprises glass, plastic, cellulose acetate, or polyethyleneterephthalate.

18 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the substrate is flexible.

19 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres are immobilized on the substrate in a concentration between 100 and 1 million microspheres per cm^2 .

20 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres are immobilized on the substrate in a concentration between 1000 and 200,000 microspheres per cm^2 .

21 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres are immobilized on the substrate in a concentration between 10,000 and 100,000 microspheres per cm^2 .

22 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres are immobilized on the substrate upon gelation of the gelling agent.

23 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 12 wherein the microspheres carry surface active sites.

24 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 23 wherein the surface active sites carry organic or inorganic attachments.

25 (withdrawn) A coating composition according to claim 23 wherein the surface active site is capable of chemical or physical interaction.

26 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 23 wherein the surface active site is bioactive.

27 (withdrawn) The microarray according to claim 26 wherein the bioactive site interacts with nucleic acid, protein, or fragments thereof.

28 (withdrawn) The microarray of claim 12 wherein the microspheres are randomly distributed on the substrate.

29 (withdrawn) The microarray of claim 12 wherein the substrate is characterized by an absence of specific sites capable of interacting physically or chemically with the microspheres.

30 (withdrawn) A method of making a microarray comprising the steps of:

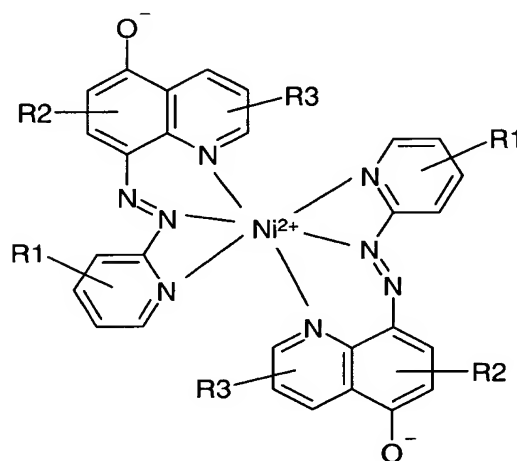
--providing a substrate; and

--coating on the substrate the composition according to claim 1;

wherein said composition is fluid during coating and the microspheres become immobilized in the plane of the coating due to sol-gel transition.

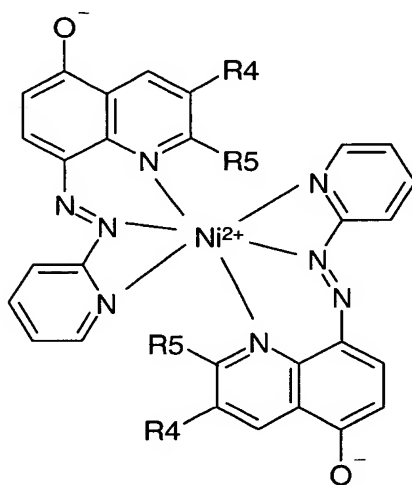
31 (withdrawn) The method of claim 30 wherein the microspheres become randomly immobilized on the substrate.

32 (withdrawn, currently amended) A microsphere for making an array, the microsphere comprising a capsule containing a low fluorescing dye represented by Formula (I).



Formula (I)

33 (withdrawn, currently amended) A microsphere for making an array, the microsphere comprising a capsule containing a low fluorescing dye represented by Formula (II):



Formula (II)